

## ODEQ Order Triggers Multi-year Utility Rate Hike

A pending order by the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, requiring the City of Bixby to expand and modernize its sanitary sewer treatment facilities to accommodate the community's burgeoning population, has triggered a multi-year, phased-in sewer rate hike for City of Bixby utility customers, effective July 1, 2012. The sewer rate adjustment and others listed below will first appear on utility bills mailed to customers at the end of July. Since this will be the first time Bixby's sewer rates have been adjusted in 14 years (March 1998), the process will gradually bring them into line with rates which utility customers in area cities with modern sanitary sewer treatment facilities have been paying for years.

"The treatment processes employed by the City of Bixby for decades and based on a small service population can no longer support the City's demands given our growth over the last 15 years," City Manager Doug Enevoldsen noted. "Our population having recently eclipsed 21,000 people, Bixby was one of the fastest growing cities in the state this past decade, and we only see ourselves continuing to grow in the coming years. Our premier public schools, our status as the safest community our size in Oklahoma and the many attractive quality of life amenities found here are daily leading additional families to choose to live in Bixby, and placing additional demands on our utility infrastructure. So it only logical that we must periodically re-invest in our utility systems to keep pace with this demand, and modify rates to finance the capital investment and associated increases in operating costs. And in light of the ODEQ order, we simply have no choice but to act at this time," he continued. For more information concerning the sanitary sewer issue, see "2011 Bond Issue Project Status Report" elsewhere in this newsletter.

### Sanitary Sewer Rates

The current Residential Base Rate is \$5.00 for the first 1,000 gallons of water usage per month and \$0.90 per thousand gallons after the first 1,000 gallons. The new Rate structure, effective 07-01-12 through 06-30-13, will be \$6.75 for the Residential Base Rate with \$1.75 for each 1,000 gallons thereafter. The maximum monthly residential charge, now \$15.00, will become \$20.00. These rates will gradually be modified upward in each of the following four years. For commercial and other rates, and additional info, see our website: [www.bixby.com](http://www.bixby.com), under topic "Water/Sewer/Stormwater Rates".

### EMS Fee

Effective 07-01-12, the monthly Ambulance Service Fee appearing on City of Bixby residential water customers' utility bills will become known as the EMS Fee and the rate increased from \$1.80 to \$3.50 per residence (outside city limits \$4.00). The new rates will help fund the increasing EMSA charges for providing emergency ambulance services to our growing community. See related article on page \_\_\_\_.

### Stormwater Management Fee

Effective 07-01-12, the monthly Stormwater Management fee appearing on City of Bixby residential water customers' utility bills will be increased from \$2.00 to \$4.00 per residence, in order to restore lost purchasing power eroded by inflation over the past 25 years. Bixby's rate structure, which was first established in 1987 and has remained unchanged since, will still be among the lowest in the region. The monthly stormwater management surcharge for utility customers located outside the city limits will increase from \$6.00 to \$9.00. Rates for commercial accounts, which are based on a formula involving amounts of impervious surface area located on their properties, will be modified upward effective 07-01-12 and in each of the following four years. (For specifics, see: [www.bixby.com](http://www.bixby.com), under topic "Water/Sewer/Stormwater Rates".)

## Bottom Line

Q - So how much will my monthly utility bill increase as a result of these various rate hikes?

A – Each utility customer’s total monthly bill varies based on the actual amount of water they use. On average, 11% of Bixby water customers use 2,000 gallons per month or less; 27% use between 2,000 and 5,000 gallons per month; 31% use between 5,000 and 10,000 gallons per month, and; 31% use more than 10,000 gallons per month. Use is generally higher in summer months due to more outside watering.

Total monthly utility bill increase for residential customer using various gallons of water per month, effective 07-01-12 through 06-30-13:

2,000 gals... \$ 6.30

5,000 gals... \$ 8.85

10,000 gals ... \$10.60